

BHDDH Bulletin

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DIRECTOR

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BHDDH Receives Approval for Health Homes Program

A state plan amendment for Medicaid Health Homes, submitted by BHDDH in collaboration with the state Medicaid authority of the Office of Health & Human Services (OHHS), was approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on Wednesday, November 23. The amendment provides BHDDH with enhanced federal funding for the coordination of physical care and behavioral healthcare for individuals who have serious and persistent mental health conditions.



According to a technical report developed by the Medical Directors' Council of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), persons with serious and persistent mental illness (SPMI) are now dying 25 years earlier than the general population. For this reason, and because a high percentage of people with mental health conditions have co-morbidities, CMS, in conjunction with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), recognized that there are many in this population who can be better served when physical care is coordinated with behavioral healthcare.

Those individuals who are on Medicaid and have serious and persistent mental health conditions are eligible and automatically enrolled in the program. Health Homes teams will be located at all BHDDH-licensed community mental health organizations (CMHOs) in Rhode Island. CMHOs will be responsible for establishing their own integrated service networks. Depending on the needs of the person, six services are available: comprehensive care management, care coordination, individual and family support services, health promotion, comprehensive transitional care, and referrals to community and social support services.

"Rhode Island is the first state in the country to address coordinated care for individuals with serious mental illness and to discuss peer supports in a health homes state plan amendment", said Director Stenning. "This amendment transforms the mental health system as we know it. Coordinated care allows this population to be treated sooner, in less expensive settings, and to receive preventative services at the same time."

With the implementation of this program, there is an expectation of cost savings across inpatient hospital settings and emergency room care systems. The results for individuals will be longer lives, fewer emergency room visits, better access to both physical and behavioral health care, and a decline in the number of hospitalizations.

Holiday Message of Hope for Veterans and Others Recovering from Substance Use Disorders will be Unveiled at "Cookies with Santa" Event



Director Stenning will deliver a Holiday Message of Hope at the "Cookies with Santa" celebration on Saturday, December 17 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Anchor Recovery Community Center, 249 Main Street in Pawtucket. Director Stenning will speak at 1:30 p.m.

"Events such as these allow us to celebrate the holidays and continue to recognize the efforts of veterans and others in recovery along with their families", says Director Stenning. "It is important to let them know that, with hope, faith, as well as the support and love of family and agency staff, recovery is probable, not just possible."

Jim Gillen, Director of the Anchor Recovery Community Center says: "Holidays can be stressful, so we believe in the importance of celebrating in a way that not only the family, but the whole community can enjoy".

The event, which includes refreshments, will feature a Bwana Iguana Reptile Show. Children will also have the opportunity to visit with Santa.

BHDDH Receives Grant to Collect Performance Measures for Developmental Disabilities Services

BHDDH recently was awarded a National Data Measurement Project grant from the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS). The grant, which is effective July 1, 2012 for the 2012-2013 fiscal years, will enable BHDDH to collect critical information about service outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The grant also will provide BHDDH with the opportunity to adopt the National Core Indicators. The National Core Indicators (NCI) will be the data set used to measure the outcomes.

The funding is provided in order to assist states in managing and improving the quality of services furnished to individuals with I/DD and their families through the use of valid and reliable data to measure performance and outcomes.

"BHDDH is very happy to be a recipient of this grant," said Director Stenning. "The opportunity to gather valid, reliable data will help BHDDH ensure high quality services are delivered to this important population."

Funding is being made available through the United States Department of Health & Human Services Administration on Developmental Disabilities' (ADD's) National Data Measurement Project, and it will be administered through a contract between BHDDH and NASDDDS. It will cover the costs of the first year of data collection with the expectation that the State will continue to participate in NCI data collection in subsequent years.

Lou Joseph, Director of Rhode Island Community Living and Supports (RICLAS), Retires after 33 Years of Service

On November 12, Lou Joseph retired from the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH) after 33 years of service. For many years, Lou served as the Director of RICLAS. Lou began his career as a member of the support staff at the Substance Abuse Unit of BHDDH. He then worked at the Ladd Center and eventually became the manager of Ladd. Lou credits his experience at these positions for much of his success at RICLAS - experience that provided him with insight into the individuals RICLAS serves and that enabled him to make good decisions on their behalf. He also enjoyed working with RICLAS employees, who share his commitment to providing quality services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

When asked about his greatest accomplishment, Lou said his efforts to keep the needs and interests of RICLAS residents foremost in his mind - specifically day-to-day activities they enjoy, housing, their environment and support. "Having access to things that most of us take for granted such as a living room to enjoy quiet times, going shopping for clothes, buying groceries and being part of a community, give individuals with I/DD a sense of value and self-worth," said Lou. Charles Williams has replaced Lou as Director.

Articles of Interest

Use this link to read a Providence Journal article about two students with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are now attending college:

http://digital.olivesoftware.com/Default/Scripting/ArticleWin.asp?From=Search&Key=TPJ/2011/11/14/27/Ar02700.xml&CollName=TPJ_APA3&DOCID=64143&PageLabelPrint=D1&skin=ProvidenceJournal&AW=1323700568912&AppName=2&sPublication=TPJ&sQuery=A%20Degree%20of%20Success&sSorting=%2553%2563%256f%2572%2565%2c%2564%2565%2573%2563&sDateFrom=%2530%2537%2f%2530%2531%2f%2532%2530%2530%2536&sDateTo=%2531%2532%2f%2530%2531%2f%2532%2530%2531%2531&ViewMode=GIF

The Department Welcomes Living Innovations to the BHDDH Provider Community

An agency that provides support services for individuals with developmental disabilities, Living Innovations, is a new service provider for BHDDH. The primary residential service model the agency offers is Shared Living. Established in 1996, Living Innovations' main office is located in Greenland, New Hampshire with three additional locations in New Hampshire and four in Maine.

Heather Chaves is the director of the first office in Rhode Island, which recently opened in Warwick at 2374 Post Road. This past summer, 15 home providers in Rhode Island were qualified to share their lives with people with disabilities.

"We serve our clients in the community, not in a facility," says Neal Ouellett, President of Living Innovations. "Our staff members pick them up at their homes - during normal or non-traditional hours - and drive them to activities of interest such as health and fitness, art and cooking classes. Being part of a real family and having natural connections with the local community is an option we are presenting." Other services offered by the agency are respite/ companionship care, in-home support and community connections.



Please submit any items that may be of interest to our readers by e-mail or fax to Deb Varga (e-mail: dvarga@bhddh.ri.gov; fax: 401-462-3204). **We are now on Facebook!**